

Practices in the Field of Social Integration and Volunteering of Swiss Sport Clubs

Session: Social Inclusion and Volunteering in Sport Clubs in Europe

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Organized sport is considered to have a high potential for both, enhancing bio-psychological health and social integration (e.g. Elling et al., 2001). However, people with disabilities or migration background are less physically active and underrepresented in sport clubs (e.g. Becker & Anneken, 2013; Lamprecht et al., 2014). The aim of this contribution is to provide a qualitative description of specific sport clubs that support social integration and voluntary engagement. The contribution follows two questions: How and through which measures do sport clubs integrate people with disabilities or migration background? How do sport clubs manage voluntary work?

Social integration in a sport club is a process of reciprocal exchange and convergence between members. It becomes apparent in the type and depth of the embeddedness of a member in the various different communications and activity contexts that are specific to sports clubs: e.g. the extent of being accepted as a member, having friendships within the club or participating in club life (based on Esser, 2004).

The analysis of good practice examples in Switzerland focused on planning, funding, partnerships, communication, awareness raising methods and recruiting/retaining members and volunteers as well as non-sport related activities.

The results show that the professional Football Club Thun offers free special training sessions for refugees and children with mental disabilities within the framework of corporate social responsibility. The Basketball Club Femina Bern promotes social integration of young female immigrants by an integration-oriented culture and social environment as well as particular structures. Furthermore, both clubs are outstanding concerning volunteering.

References

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